

REMARKS CONCERNING CLAIM REJECTIONS

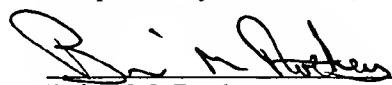
Claims 1-32 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Klaue et al. in view of Frigg et al. Claims 2, 3, 21, and 30 have been canceled. Independent claims 1, 16, 20, 24, 27 have been amended to include the following requirement: "the bone plate defines a nominal plate thickness in regions between the holes, and the protrusion defines an increased plate thickness that is about 1.5 to 2 times greater than the nominal plate thickness." These claim amendments do not represent acquiescence in the Examiner's rejections, but rather are made to further clarify and define the present invention and expedite prosecution of this application.

Reconsideration of this application and allowance of claims 1, 4-20, 22-29, and 31-32 are respectfully requested in view of the amendments above.

The Examiner is invited to call the undersigned attorney at (212) 790-6295, if a telephone call could help resolve any remaining items.

A separate petition for a one-month extension of time is submitted herewith. The fee for this extension is estimated to be \$110.00. Please charge this fee and any other required fees to Jones Day Deposit Account No. 503013.

Date: March 4, 2004

Respectfully submitted,

By: Brian M. Rothery (Reg. No. 35,340)

JONES DAY
222 East 41st St.
New York, NY 10017
(212) 326-3939